

reconciliation by MissAtomicBomb (mrs_nerimon)

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Summary:

It's 9 am on a Saturday, and Steve Harrington is standing on his porch.

Two former monster hunting partners confront what they have in common.

reconciliation

Author's Note:

S2 spoilers

I have.... Conflicting feelings about the teens in s2, but these two need to desperately have a convo. Please be friends in season 3!

It's 9 am on a Saturday, and Steve Harrington is standing on his porch.

Jonathan's first thought is that he's gonna get his ass kicked.

Logically, he knows Steve isn't like that anymore. He saw the way he talked to the kids, and even the way he talked to Nancy outside the house. Nancy said *he* said it was okay, but there's still that flight instinct that kicks in as Steve shoves his hands in his jacket pockets and squares up his shoulders.

"Hey," He says, like he needs no further explanation as to why he's on Jonathan's porch on a weekend morning. "You free today?"

Steve likes to *move*. He walks fast and he talks fast and when he's not walking he paces, or waves his hands around, or futzes with his hair. He's constantly in motion, like if he stops for too long something is gonna happen.

Jonathan tries to keep up the pace as Steve heads down the park sidewalk. He moves with purpose, with direction, with a set end goal.

However, his conversation appears to lack one.

He asks about Will, then school, then if he's looking at any colleges yet. They talk about both having Cooper for English for a bit, then

about the new movies opening next weekend. Steve's got tickets to see *Nightmare on Elm Street* already. He says, much to Jonathan's surprise, that he's taking *Dustin*.

"I hope it scares the shit out of him." Steve says, but there's a smile on his face.

More school talk. Something about a new restaurant opening downtown. Jonathan finds himself growing more and more nervous as the walk continues, winding loops around the park's central pond.

What's Steve looking for here? Just a distraction from thinking about the past week? An admission of guilt (Jonathan thinks he feels one starting low in his stomach) or culpability? Some advice on how to deal with how crazy their lives are becoming?

Steve's been silent for a minute or so now, he realizes. He's hunched up his shoulders, huddled into himself as a question begins to form on his face.

"Do you-" He cuts himself off, shakes his head. "Do you like me, Jonathan?"

This is definitely *not* what he was expecting.

Jonathan never spends much time thinking about if he likes people at all. For the most part, they don't like him, so it hardly matters. There's Nancy, of course, and he'd rather not think of all the nights he spent looking up at the ceiling and wondering just how much she *did* like him.

Steve is.... Fine, he guesses. He's nice, sort of. After last fall he would go out of his way to say 'hi' at school, even invited him to one or two parties. Jonathan always just assumed Steve tolerated him as a tangent of Nancy's life, and not someone he would genuinely care about were she not involved.

He's been quiet for too long. Steve is staring at him, eyes narrowing as he rubs his hands together.

"I- Sure." He offers.

That doesn't seem to be the appropriate answer. Steve stops on a dime, his whole body freezing up as he contemplates how to say this.

"I just....*Look*. About Nancy."

Maybe he is getting his ass kicked, Jonathan thinks.

"I want you to know that I'm not... mad." Steve chews on his lip. "I mean, it's weird, and I think I'm allowed to think it *sucks*, but I'm not mad."

Jonathan tries to release the fist his fingers have curled into.

"I- I think you're... Fine."

Should he say thanks? That's a compliment, right?

"And- And if you want... I mean, you guys are and... and that's cool! That's fine. And you don't... it's not like you need my approval or like....like...like...." Steve ends that statement with a defined shrug of his shoulders. "You know what I mean?"

"I think so." Jonathan lies.

Steve sighs loudly and kicks a Nike across the dirt.

"You and I, we don't have to- We can be friends. That's all."

Jonathan tries to imagine telling himself of last October that Steve Harrington would be offering to be his friend. The idea somehow seems almost more ludicrous than anything he's seen in the past few days.

"Okay." He says.

Steve seems happy with this. He holds out a hand, stiff with his fingers spread wide, looking like he's about to shake hands with the opposing team's captain. It's a beat before Jonathan reaches out and takes it.

"Okay." Steve repeats, and he drops his hand.

Blissfully, he cuts the excursion short after that.

Steve offers to drive him home, and things have gone so remarkably smooth up until this point that Jonathan's nearly expecting a curveball.

Steve, naturally, delivers.

"So, can I ask like- what happened with you guys?" Steve grips the wheel a little tighter, and Jonathan's surprised to find he can spot the anxiety in the way he taps his fingers, quirks an eyebrow in a display of false confidence. "I mean, on your road trip or whatever."

Something sick starts to prickle inside his gut. Under any circumstances, Nancy-related or not, he really wouldn't want to discuss this type of thing with Steve. But especially thinking back on the moment, the fireworks that seemed to erupt in his chest when Nancy kissed him, which he feels stirring again until Steve shifts in his seat and he remembers he is real and nervous and sitting beside him.

A dirty feeling washes over him. He knows Nancy and Steve weren't really broken up when they-

Yeah. *Yeah.*

Which makes him feel a little gross and pretty shitty about it all. He doesn't regret it (Jesus, never, *never*) but he does wish, just maybe, things were different.

Like maybe they were at home, instead of a stranger's guest room. And maybe they hadn't each drunk a glass of vodka mixed something that did very little to mask the taste of vodka.

Steve raises an eyebrow.

"I mean, you don't have to-"

"We slept together." It kind of all comes out in a rush, spilling forth from the place inside him where he's tried so hard to keep it tucked away. He's not told anyone since it happened; he has no friends to swap stories with, Will's far too young, and he'd rather Mom think

him a virgin far into middle age before he came to her with anything like that.

But Steve is: a) a male, b) his age, and c) far more experienced in that area that he is.

He's also: d) Nancy's very recently ex-boyfriend, which should have been enough of a deterrent on its own.

Dammit, Jonathan.

He tries to think that were he in Steve's shoes, he would want the truth. He'd rather know the full story than be left wondering forever. Now it's out there, and Jonathan watches as Steve's face shifts for just a moment, a facade crumbling, and he's just a sad and lonely teenage boy.

"I kinda just thought, like... you guys kissed. Or something."

Jonathan feels the sickness in his gut grow larger.

Steve shakes his head, his hair falls into place, and once again he looks like a prom king.

"Well," he says, and there's the beginning of a smile on his face. "Didn't think you had it in you, Byers."

Jonathan doesn't know if that's a dig or not, so he elects to stay silent.

Steve seems to mull that over for another long minute, white knuckles tight on the steering wheel as he thinks.

"I was right." He says, and when that gets no response he glances over. "About something going on with you two I mean- I was right."

Jonathan doesn't know what to say. Steve was still *wrong* in the things he said about Nancy last fall. He was wrong in thinking he'd ever really try and ... What? *Take* her?

But, admittedly, he *was* right, too. Because he's wanted Nancy since nearly the first night he fell asleep in her bed, and all that time that

he lay awake at night thinking of her, there was Steve, standing by and supporting her. All that time, Steve was the good boyfriend, the guy she took to dances and brought home to dinner, and he was just the occasional friend she shared too long glances with across the classroom.

None of this makes anything that happened between them okay. It doesn't make it wrong either, he thinks.

Steve sighs.

"Sorry, I didn't mean it like that." He rubs a hand along his jaw, and Jonathan still can't seem to find the words that would make this conversation any less uncomfortable.

"S'Okay."

They turn onto his street in silence. Will's bike begins come into focus on the porch, and Steve slows to a stop.

"Well," He clears his throat, and Jonathan's weirdly glad that he seems just as unnerved by this experience as he is. "Maybe we could-could catch a movie. Or... Something."

Jonathan slowly finds himself smiling.

"Something."

He opens the car door and stuffs his hands in his pockets. Steve leans over as he pushes the door closed, and he can hear his next comment through the open window.

"Maybe I could give you some tips."

Jonathan can practically feel the color draining from his face, until Steve splits into a smile and lets out a hacking laugh.

"It's just so *easy*." He calls, and the car peels out of the driveway.